

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Central District of California

United States of America

v.

DANIEL EUGEN BOAR,

aka "Rajko Balazs," and "Petr Kucera,"

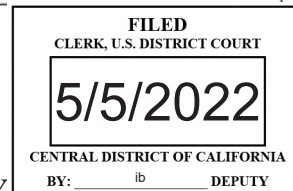
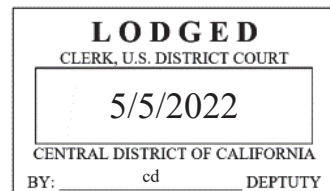
ATTILA RAVASZ,

ANDREI-RAUL CIRILESCU,

RADU-MARIAN MOLDOVAN,

Defendant(s)

Case No. 2:22-mj-01749-DUTY



**CRIMINAL COMPLAINT BY TELEPHONE
OR OTHER RELIABLE ELECTRONIC MEANS**

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

As described in the accompanying attachment, defendant violated the following statutes:

Code Section

18 U.S.C. §§ 1344, 1349, 1028A

*Offense Description*Conspiracy to Commit Bank Fraud,
Aggravated Identity Theft

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

Please see attached affidavit.

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

/s/ Rene Persaud

Complainant's signature

Rene Persaud, Special Agent

Printed name and title

Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone.

Date: 5/5/2022

Judge's signature

City and state: Los Angeles, California

Hon. Alexander MacKinnon, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

Complaint Attachment

Count One, 18 U.S.C. § 1349

Beginning in or before 2021, and continuing through at least May 4, 2022, in Los Angeles County, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendants DANIEL EUGEN BOAR, aka "Rajko Balazs" and "Petr Kucera," ATTILA RAVASZ, ANDREI-RAUL CIRILESCU, and RADU-MARIAN MOLDOVAN ("Defendants"), and others, conspired to commit bank fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344. The object of the conspiracy was carried out, and to be carried out, in substance, as follows: Defendants and their co-conspirators would secretly install skimming devices in ATMs to record the account information of bank customers, and would then counterfeit debit and credit cards bearing that information. Defendants and their co-conspirators would use the counterfeit cards to withdraw funds in the names of those victims of identity theft, and would share the proceeds and send them abroad. Federally-insured financial institutions defrauded as a result of this conspiracy include Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Golden 1 Credit Union, Provident Bank, Kinecta Federal Credit Union, EBT Cards, JP Morgan Chase, Navy Federal Credit Union, Patelco Credit Union, Comerica Bank, Regions Bank, PNC Bank, Sunrise Bank, Bay First Bank, Sunrise Bank, Bancorp, Capital One, Keypoint Credit Union, Bank of the West, BBVA, and US Bank.

Count Two, 18 U.S.C. § 1028A

Beginning in or before 2021, and continuing through at least May 4, 2022, in Los Angeles County, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendants DANIEL EUGEN BOAR, aka "Rajko Balazs" and "Petr Kucera," ATTILA RAVASZ, ANDREI-RAUL CIRILESCU, and RADU-MARIAN MOLDOVAN knowingly transferred, possessed, and used, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person during and in relation to a felony violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349, Conspiracy to Commit Bank Fraud, as charged in Count One, knowing that the means of identification belonged to another actual person.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Rene Persaud being duly sworn, declare and state as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. I am a Special Agent ("SA") with the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and have been so employed since September 2018. Prior to becoming a SA, I worked for the FBI's Special Surveillance Group for approximately four years. Prior to joining the FBI, I was a Deputy Sheriff for the Hillsborough County (Florida) Sheriff's Office for approximately three years.

2. I have participated in various aspects of criminal enterprise investigations, including but not limited to, conducting surveillance and arrests, issuing subpoenas, seizing and impounding drug evidence, social media analysis, and the analysis of telephone tolls and other data. Additionally, I have interviewed and/or debriefed confidential informants and other witnesses who have had knowledge regarding the investigations in which I have been involved. I have also authored, sworn out, and executed multiple search warrants for various entities, including but not limited to, internet service providers, social media companies, GPS tracking units, and physical residences/businesses.

3. I also have extensive experience investigating Romanian Organized Criminal Groups. I have conducted investigations in the Los Angeles area related to the ATM skimming activity and money laundering, and I have also traveled to Romania on multiple occasions to work with National Police

forces in several cities in order to obtain information, coordinate investigations, and identify criminals who travel from Europe to the United States to defraud the American banking system.

II. SEEKING COMPLAINT TO SUPPORT PROBABLE CAUSE ARRESTS

3. This affidavit is made in support of a complaint against DANIEL EUGEN BOAR ("BOAR"), ATTILA RAVASZ ("RAVASZ"), ANDREI-RAUL CIRILESCU ("CIRILESCU"), and RADU-MARIAN MOLDOVAN ("MOLDOVAN") for conspiracy to commit bank fraud, and aggravated identity theft, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1344, 1349, and 1028A, for running an ATM skimming crew.

4. The information set forth in this affidavit is based upon my participation in the investigation, encompassing my personal knowledge, observations and experience, as well as information obtained through my review of evidence, investigative reports, and information provided by others, including other law enforcement partners. As this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing the requested warrants, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause for the requested warrants.

III. STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

A. Summary and Background of Investigation

5. According to information provided by Romanian Law enforcement officials, beginning in October 2021 members of a Romanian Organized Crime Group traveled from Romania to Mexico, and illegally entered the United States, or entered the United States on visas and then overstayed them. (In my training and experience, members of skimming crews who have no prior run-ins with U.S. immigration or law enforcement will often enter the U.S. under their real names and then overstay their visas. Skimming crew members who have criminal records or immigration problems that prevent their legal entry into the U.S., in contrast, typically enter the U.S. from Mexico with the help of professional alien smugglers. These members also often use false identification documents within the U.S.). This group traveled to San Jose, California and began conducting ATM skimming activity. The group moved between San Jose, to San Francisco, and ended up in Los Angeles while conducting ATM skimmer installations and fraudulent cash withdrawals targeting bank accounts of U.S. citizens receiving government assistance from COVID relief funds.

6. Following the commission of these crimes, members of the criminal group transferred the profits of the fraud to Romania or invested it in cryptocurrencies. According to Romanian law enforcement, they had evidence that members of this conspiracy had already repatriated over one million euros to Romania. On May 3, 2022, Magistrate Judge Rozella A. Oliver

signed a federal search warrant to search 2310 South Sycamore Avenue, Los Angeles, CA, an address associated with this organized crime group. During the search of this residence on May 4, 2022, law enforcement officers discovered nearly \$20,000 in US currency, over 1,400 cloned ATM cards, and over a dozen ATM skimming devices and pin hole cameras. Four previously unknown members of this group were also identified at 2310 South Sycamore Avenue: BOAR, RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN.

B. Explanation of Access Device Fraud Scheme

7. Based on my training and experience in investigating fraudulent schemes of this nature, I know the following about Access Device Fraud: ATM skimming devices are manually installed at walk-up or drive-thru ATM terminals. The card readers are surreptitiously inserted into the ATM card slots, and are often thin enough to go unnoticed to a lay person using an ATM. In addition to the card reader, another device is installed to obtain the PIN number. This device is often a covert camera that captures customers entering their PIN number.

8. An ATM skimming device is installed for a specified period of time after which the subjects who installed the device will return to the ATM and remove it. Once the device is removed, the customer credit card numbers and PIN numbers are retrieved from the device. The card numbers are then loaded on to blank cards so the perpetrators can travel to ATMs and fraudulently withdraw funds from victim customer accounts.

C. Search Warrant Executed and BOAR Ignored and Resisted Law Enforcement

9. On May 3, 2022, the Honorable Magistrate Judge Rozella A. Oliver issued a federal search warrant for 2310 South Sycamore Avenue, Los Angeles, CA based on information provided by Romanian Law Enforcement and surveillance observations by FBI Agents.

10. On May 4, 2022, law enforcement officers from the FBI, Los Angeles Police Department, and Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (who all wore clearly identifiable markings) executed the search warrant just after 6:00 AM. After knocking on the door and making several loud announcements like "this is the FBI we have a search warrant, come to the door" the occupants inside the residence neither acknowledge us nor opened the door. As a result, FBI Agents had to force open the door to the residence. Law enforcement officers continued to make announcements clearly articulating their identity and their legal reason for being there, at which point BOAR was spotted in the window of the master bedroom on the second floor of the residence. BOAR came downstairs and initially complied with commands, then walked around the living room, appearing to reach into various hidden areas in the kitchen and living room. BOAR got on his knees several times, then stood up and walked around while physically looking at FBI Agents, who wore markings clearly identifying themselves. After several commands were given and ignored, FBI Agents entered the residence and detained BOAR in handcuffs. BOAR tensed up his muscles during this process, and it required

two FBI Agents to safely detain BOAR while applying the minimal force necessary to accomplish this task. RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN were located in and around their bedrooms and surrendered themselves to law enforcement inside the home without resisting.

11. While the search took place, FBI Agents conducted interviews with the detained subjects. At one point, BOAR observed FBI Agents attempting to interview MOLDOVAN, and this enraged BOAR. BOAR began screaming at the Agents and told MOLDOVAN in the Romanian language not to cooperate with the FBI. An FBI linguist overheard this interaction and confirmed that BOAR was aggressively telling MOLDOVAN not to cooperate with the FBI. During this interaction, BOAR began moving aggressively towards MOLDOVAN, and I had to physically restrain BOAR for fear of physical harm coming to MOLDOVAN. BOAR continued to shout at MOLDOVAN, and at me, and another FBI Agent had to help me physically restrain BOAR as he attempted to overpower me. FBI SA Daniel Lim and I were able to restrain BOAR and walk him to a vehicle at the end of the street where BOAR continued to yell at me and tell MOLDOVAN not to cooperate.

D. Evidence of a Conspiracy to Commit Bank Fraud Located Throughout the Residence

12. As discussed earlier, FBI Agents entered 2310 South Sycamore Avenue to conduct a federal search warrant. The residence, a two-story home with four bedrooms, contained evidence of ATM skimming throughout the house. Specifically,

when FBI Agents entered the home to clear it for bodies, the kitchen table was laid out like an ATM Skimming laboratory. I observed multiple ATM skimming devices, specialized tools to insert the skimming devices into ATMs, multiple laptops and hard drives attached to card reader/writers (which are used to reproduce ATM cards after their data has been stolen), as well as cloned ATM cards with PIN numbers written hand-written on them, all in plain view for all occupants of the house to see, as shown in the attached photograph.

13. Between the four bedrooms, the living room, and the two vehicles parked on the property, law enforcement officers seized over a dozen ATM skimming devices which, as discussed earlier, are capable of stealing customer ATM card data. These skimming devices were deep-insert devices which are thin enough to be surreptitiously inserted to an ATM to steal data, and there were also skimmers built in to Point-of-Sale terminals. These Point-of-Sale skimmers are black, plastic face-plates with a skimmer built into the keypad that can be quickly placed on top of a Point-of-Sale terminal at a retail store like a CVS or Target to steal customer credit card data.

14. Law enforcement officers also seized over 20 pinhole cameras which, as previously discussed, are used to steal customer PIN numbers for their ATM cards. These pinhole cameras, like the skimmers, were unusually sophisticated in their design. Specifically, there were pinhole cameras designed as flat "crown molding" type bars that traditionally affix to the sides of an ATM panel and so would likely go unnoticed by a customer. There

were also pinhole cameras built into a triangular shape that affix to the corners of an ATM, another location that may go unnoticed by the average customer. The final type of pinhole camera seen was built into a sign that is common at most ATMs and extremely sophisticated. This device was built into the plastic faceplate of a "Availability of Deposits" sign on an ATM that describes when cash/check deposits would be available for withdrawal. Such signs are common on U.S. ATMs and appear as an official message from a financial institution, making it very unlikely that a customer would notice the hidden camera.

15. Law enforcement officers also seized approximately \$19,451 as well as approximately 1,465 suspected cloned ATM cards. These suspected cloned ATM cards had various bank and credit union names written on them to indicate the financial institutions that were victimized. These victim institutions included Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Golden 1 Credit Union, Provident Bank, Kinecta Federal Credit Union, EBT Cards, JP Morgan Chase, Navy Federal Credit Union, Patelco Credit Union, Comerica Bank, Regions Bank, PNC Bank, Sunrise Bank, Bay First Bank, Sunrise Bank, Bancorp, Capital One, Keypoint Credit Union, Bank of the West, BBVA, and US Bank.

16. Based on my training investigating Romanian Organized Criminals engaged in ATM skimming fraud, evidence of this magnitude indicates that multiple individuals must be involved in order to run such a sophisticated, profitable operation while going undetected from law enforcement view. In order to build the skimming devices and pinhole cameras, obtain the metal and

plastic housing units to attach them to, install the devices and cameras without being detected, retrieve the devices, obtain the stolen card data and load it onto a computer, then load stolen card data from a computer to blank cards (many of which are stolen gift cards from various retail stores) and conduct ATM cash withdrawals requires a level of man power and sophistication that cannot be accomplish without an organized criminal conspiracy.

17. Though this group lived in the house together and evidence of ATM skimming was found in common areas, evidence was also found in individual bedrooms associated with the group. Specifically, in the upstairs bedroom where BOAR slept, his fraudulent Czech Republic passport was found along with multiple cloned ATM cards, ATM skimming devices, and skimming device making equipment. In the upstairs bedroom that MOLDOVAN slept in, a stack of cloned ATM cards was found in the bedroom dresser along with a pile of US currency. In the upstairs bedroom that CIRILESCU slept in, several thousand dollars were found in the bedroom dresser and cloned ATM cards were found in clothing within the closet of the bedroom. In the downstairs bedroom that RAVASZ slept in, multiple cloned ATM cards were found in the bedroom and in his wallet.

E. Interviews Identified BOAR as Leader of the Group

18. As discussed previously, the subjects were individually interviewed during the execution of the search warrant. Prior to the interviews, the subjects were detained

outside the residence and spoke amongst each other in the Romanian language. An FBI Linguist overheard these conversations and informed me that BOAR was coaching RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN to coordinate their stories and claim they had only been in the United States for a few weeks.

19. During the individual interviews with RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN, they all claimed that they were in the United States on vacation, and they had been in Los Angeles for a short period of time ranging from five days to two weeks. They also all claimed they were from the Transylvania region of Romania. During the interview, one defendant claimed that "Dan" was in charge, referring to BOAR.

20. When BOAR was interviewed, he claimed his name was "Petr" and he was from the Czech Republic. I uttered the phrase in Czech to him "Rozumim Cesky" which translates in English to "I understand Czech" and BOAR did not appear to understand what I said. I then asked BOAR what city in the Czech Republic he was from, and he said Bratislava, which is a city in the Republic of Slovakia not the Czech Republic. I then asked the FBI Linguist to speak to him in Romanian, which he understood and replied in Romanian.

21. I interviewed BOAR a second time after the incident described above where I had to restrain BOAR. I asked BOAR if he understood that as an FBI Agent, I was a Federal Law Enforcement Officer and he said he understood. I then explained the elements of 18 USC 1001, specifically I informed BOAR that lying to a Federal Law Enforcement Officer during an investigation is

illegal and could result in his arrest. BOAR continued to maintain that his name was "Petr", and he was from the Czech Republic though he could not tell me what city he was from. BOAR told me that he had been in the California for a few months, but RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN had only been in California for a few weeks, and they did not know anything. The way he phrased this statement suggests that RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN work underneath BOAR, and BOAR oversaw the operation. When asked if BOAR was the leader, he did not confirm nor deny this fact. As noted above, BOAR lived in the master bedroom of the two-story residence which based on my training and experience suggests he possessed a higher status among the group.

22. BOAR, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN refused to provide us with the passcode number to unlock their cellphones. FBI Agents were attempting to obtain the passcode number for MOLDOVAN'S phone when BOAR, as discussed previously, began his heated exchange with FBI Agents and MOLDOVAN trying to prevent him from cooperating.

23. All the subjects claimed to have no knowledge of any fraud activity, though they did acknowledge seeing the items on the table and claimed they did not know what they were for. None of the subjects wanted to discuss anything regarding the items found associated with ATM skimming. An FBI Linguist who speaks Romanian was present for these interviews which took place in English and Romanian.

24. Based on my training and experience, Romanian Organized Criminals generally work in an informal hierarchical

structure. By that I mean the group does not have a traditional "La Cosa Nostra" type ranking structure, however there is generally a leader within a group that disseminates instructions for the criminal enterprise to conduct their fraud activity. In the case of this group, specifically based on the living quarters and the interactions between them, it appears BOAR is in charge of the operations and instructs RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN on what to do within the conspiracy.

F. BOAR Possessed Identification Under Multiple Names

25. BOAR'S true identify was discovered thanks to information provided by Romanian Law Enforcement and FBI records. However, BOAR consistently lied to me about his true name, which he claimed to be "PETR". While searching the master bedroom on the second floor of the residence, where BOAR slept and multiple skimming devices were found in the closet, I found an Identification Card and brand-new Passport from the Czech Republic (which contained no immigration stamps) under the name "PETR KUCERA" bearing the photo of BOAR. During a search of the vehicles on the property, law enforcement officers found a second Identification Card with BOAR's photo, this one from Hungary bearing the name of "RAJKO BALAZS". I compared the photos on all the identification documents to BOAR, and I was able to confirm these photos were of BOAR thanks to the resemblance, and the distinct moles on BOAR'S face that make him easy to identify from photos.

G. Criminal History and Immigration History of the Subjects

26. According to his criminal history report, BOAR was arrested by the United States Secret Service in September 2018 for counterfeiting. According to probation records, BOAR served 731 days in prison for this offense and is on federal supervised release until July 2023.

27. According to his criminal history report, CIRILESCU was arrested in December 2021 for felony theft in Beverly Hills, CA. CIRILESCU was legally admitted to the U.S. in July 2021 and was supposed to depart the U.S. in January 2022, but overstayed his visa and illegally remained in the United States.

28. MOLDOVAN was legally admitted to the U.S. on a B2 Visa in February 2022 and listed his destination as Miami, FL. His visa expires in August 2022.

29. There is no information about RAVASZ being admitted to the U.S., so he may have entered the U.S. without passing through a port of entry.

H. Evading Prosecution by Shifting Addresses and Areas

30. Romanian Law Enforcement provided me with detailed information on two specific members of this conspiracy, including their photographs, names, and Romanian identification numbers. I was able to track these Original Targets to the search warrant location, and personally saw them there as recently as May 3, 2022. Romanian law enforcement identified a payment one of the Original Targets had made for temporary housing through May 4. Romanian law enforcement also indicated

that they expected the Original Targets then to travel internationally. I therefore believed that if we executed the search warrant any later than May 4, we would likely miss the Original Targets, and so sought an after-hours search warrant on May 3, 2022. In fact, the Original Targets were not at the search warrant location on May 4, so it appears that we were too late and that they had already departed.

31. In my training and experience, members of Romanian ATM skimming crews know that they will be photographed committing their crimes at ATMs, and know that law enforcement will look for them after enough victims in a given area complain about having been defrauded. Their primary defense to arrest and prosecution is to maintain a nomadic lifestyle in which they frequently switch rental cars and temporary residences, such as Airbnbs, in order to stay ahead of law enforcement. Typically they will rotate their crimes through different cities, states, and even countries. Some actually "confess" if caught by the local police red-handed, but claim it was their "first time" in order to secure a low bail amount, so they can skip out on it with little cost.

32. In this particular case, the evidence shows that BOAR, RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN have been shifting the areas in which they commit their crimes. Although the subjects were located in Los Angeles, CA, the over 1,400 suspected cloned ATM cards in their residence revealed their travels through the state of California. Specifically, several of the cloned ATM cards belonged to financial institutions that only exist in a

particular geographic region of California. For example, multiple suspected cloned ATM cards had "Patelco" written on them. Based on my research, I believe "Patelco" refers to Patelco Credit Union which is a financial institution that exclusively services the greater San Francisco area. Additionally, other suspected cloned ATM cards had "Keypoint" written on them. Based on my research, I believe "Keypoint" refers to Keypoint Credit Union which is a financial institution that largely services the greater San Francisco area, with the nearest branch over 100 miles away from 2310 South Sycamore Avenue.

CONCLUSION

33. Based upon the foregoing facts, I believe there is probable cause to believe that BOAR, RAVASZ, CIRILESCU, and MOLDOVAN violated Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1344, 1349, and 1028A.

Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone on this 5th day of May, 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Mack", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
HON. ALEXANDER F. MacKINNON

